

REMARKS:

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-26. Claims 1, 7 and 23-26 are amended herein, and new claim 27 is added. No new matter is presented. Thus, claims 1-27 are pending and under consideration. The rejections are traversed below.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102(e):

Claims 23 and 26 were being rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,498,791 (Pickett).

Pickett is directed to managing voice and data systems interfaced with a single communications system. In Pickett, a communications system (50) communicates with a file server (20), printer (22) and one or more computers (24) and includes the functionality of a PBX (see, col. 6, lines 41-45 and col. 7, lines 35-46). The communications system (50) determines when subscriber information changes to update the subscriber information (see, col. 17, lines 34-53). That is, Pickett is limited to updating subscriber information used by voice and data systems connected to a single communications system.

Independent claim 23 as amended recites, "automatically updating a subscriber directory used to route subscriber messages across different autonomous telephony voice messaging systems". Similarly, independent claim 26 recites, "updating a shared centralized subscriber directory used across the autonomous voice messaging systems to route subscriber messages among the plural message systems". This, for example, enables the present invention to automatically update "a subscriber directory" and "a shared centralized subscriber directory" used by voice messaging systems from different incompatible vendors without requiring manual input by corresponding system administrators.

Pickett, which is directed to controlling subscriber information of a communications system of a particular office does not teach or suggest the above-mentioned features of independent claims 23 and 26.

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(a):

Claims 1-10, 12-21, 24 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pickett and U.S. Patent No. 6,681,257 (Patel), and claims 11 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pickett, Patel and U.S. Patent No.

6,882,708 (Bedingfield).

The Examiner acknowledges that Pickett does not disclose use of different autonomous telephony messaging systems, but relies on Patel as teaching the same. However, the voice messaging systems of Patel use routing directories (RMD #1 and #2) that each have corresponding exclusive routing information (see, col. 16, lines 5-9 and 45-57). For example, a given message is routed using RMD #1 when the message is for area code 404 and is routed using RMD #2 when the message is for area code 770 (see, FIGS. 1 and 3 and corresponding texts).

The Examiner acknowledges that neither Pickett nor Patel teach a server directory that uses a Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP), but relies on Bedingfield as teaching the same. However, Bedingfield is directed to validating messaging transactions between customers served by voice mail servers where the messaging servers may interface with another directory server, such as LDAP directory servers that are available (see, col. 5, lines 33-37).

The present invention synchronously updates subscriber information at a shared central directory when subscriber information is updated via any one of the different voice messaging systems.

Independent claim 1 as amended recites, "generating an update request in response to an event that changes subscriber information", where the updated subscriber information becomes "accessible by the different autonomous messaging systems to route subscriber messages". For example, when an administrator or subscriber creates a message box, renames a message box, etc., the present invention makes such changes "accessible by the different autonomous messaging systems" (i.e., does not limit the change to a local subscriber database).

When an update request is generated, the present invention appends "... the update request to a queue managed by an update server and in a same order as one of corresponding subscriber actions and corresponding administrator actions occur" and updates "the shared subscriber directory server in real-time... whereby the updated subscriber information becomes accessible by the different autonomous messaging systems to route subscriber messages". Claims 24 and 25 similarly recite that a change in any one of the different autonomous telephony voice messaging systems effects a corresponding change "accessible to each of the autonomous telephony voice messaging systems to route subscriber messages".

Claims 11 and 22 recite that the present invention includes automatically synchronizing or updating "a shared subscriber directory server using Lightweight Directory Access Protocol" ("Lightweight Directory Access Protocol X.500 protocol" in claim 11).

Bedingfield merely mentions validating messaging transactions between messaging servers interfaced with a LDAP directory server, and thus, the combination of Bedingfield with Patel and Patel does not teach or suggest a method and system automatically synchronizing or updating "a shared subscriber directory server using Lightweight Directory Access Protocol" (claims 11 and 22) so that subscriber messages are routed across different autonomous telephony messaging systems.

It is submitted that the independent claims are patentable over the cited references.

For at least the above-mentioned reasons, claims depending from independent claims 1 and 7 are patentably distinguishable over the cited references. The dependent claims are also independently patentable. For example, as recited in claim 8, the present invention includes "refreshing subscriber information in the update requests... in accordance with current corresponding subscriber information in the voice messaging system, when the update requests are one of expired and in a queue not primarily associated with the voice messaging system having the subscriber information". The cited references do not teach or suggest these features of dependent claim 8.

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

NEW CLAIM:

New claim 27 has been added to recite, "automatically updating subscriber information of corresponding subscriber databases of the telephony messaging systems and the shared subscriber directory" in response to "a predetermined subscriber information change event at any one of the telephony messaging systems". This, for example, enables the present invention to synchronize "routing directories of each of the telephony messaging systems..." even when the telephony messages systems are "maintained by multiple vendors".

It is submitted that new claim 27 is patentably distinguishable over the cited references.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.


Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: _____

11-2-05

By: _____


John C. Garvey
Registration No. 28,607

1201 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501